

Chapter 6

Conclusion

Brownfields redevelopment contributes to the revitalization of communities across the U.S. Reuse of these abandoned, contaminated sites spurs economic growth, builds community pride, protects public health, and helps maintain our nation's "greenfields," often at a relatively low cost. This document provides brownfields planners with an overview of the technical methods that can be used to achieve successful site assessment and cleanup, which are two key components in the brownfields redevelopment process.

While the general guidance provided in this document will be applicable to many brownfields projects, it is important to recognize that no two brownfields sites will be identical, and planners will need to base site assessment and cleanup activities on the conditions at their particular site. Some of the conditions that may vary by site include: the type of contaminants present, the geographic location and extent of contamination, the availability of site records, hydrogeological conditions, and state and local regulatory requirements. Based on these factors, as well as financial resources and desired timeframes, planners will find different assessment and cleanup approaches appropriate.

Consultation with state and local environmental officials and community leaders, as well as careful planning early in the project, will assist planners in developing the most appropriate site assessment and cleanup approaches. Planners should also determine early on if they are likely to require the assistance of environmental engineers. A site assessment strategy should be agreeable to all stakeholders and should address:

- The type and extent of any contamination present at the site;
- The types of data needed to adequately assess the site;
- Appropriate sampling and analytical methods for characterizing contamination; and
- An acceptable level of data uncertainty.

When used appropriately, process described in this document will help to ensure that a good strategy is developed and implemented effectively.

Once the site has been assessed and stakeholders agree that cleanup is needed, planners will need to consider cleanup options. Many different types of cleanup technologies are available. The guidance provided in this document on selecting appropriate methods directs planners to base cleanup initiatives on site- and project-specific conditions. The type and extent of cleanup will depend in large part on the type and level of contamination present, reuse goals, and the budget available. Certain cleanup technologies are used onsite, while others require offsite treatment. Also, in certain circumstances, containment of contamination onsite and the use of institutional controls may be important components of the cleanup effort. Finally, planners will need to include budgetary provisions and plans for post-cleanup and post-construction care if it is required at the brownfields site. By developing a technically sound site assessment and cleanup approach that is based on site-specific conditions and addresses the concerns of all project stakeholders, planners can achieve brownfields redevelopment and reuse goals effectively and safely.